

Remarks:

Reconsideration of the application, as amended herein, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 - 22 are presently pending in the application.

Claims 1, 7 and 14 have been amended.

In item 2 of the above-identified Office Action, claims 1 - 2, 5, 7 - 8 and 10 - 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over U. S. Patent No. 6,058,844 to Niemiec ("NIEMIEC") in view of U. S. Patent No. 4,508,033 to Fischer ("FISCHER") and U. S. Patent No. 3,875,682 to Justus et al ("JUSTUS"). In item 3 of the above-identified Office Action, claims 3 - 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over NIEMIEC in view of FISCHER and JUSTUS, and further in view of U. S. Patent No. 6,550,390 to Frankenberger ("FRANKENBERGER"). In item 4 of the above-identified Office Action, claims 6 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over NIEMIEC in view of FISCHER and JUSTUS, and further in view of U. S. Patent No. 5,913,471 to Makosch et al ("MAKOSCH").

Applicant respectfully traverses the above rejections, as applied to the amended claims.

More particularly, claim 1 recites, among other limitations:

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a first apparatus disposed downstream of said press cylinder and upstream of said dryer for separating the web from said press cylinder, said separating of the web from said press cylinder being decoupled from the conveying of said web along said path; [emphasis added by Applicant]

Applicant's claims independent claims 7 and 14 have been amended to include similar limitations, among others.

The amendments to claims 1, 7 and 14 is supported by the specification of the instant application, for example, on page 7 of the instant application, line 25 - page 8, line 10, which states:

According to the invention, the first pull roll can advantageously be driven at a rotational speed that is reduced as compared with the rotational speed of the press cylinder, since the pull roll merely needs to produce a tensile stress for conveying the already separated web downstream of the printing cylinder but not for separating the web from the press cylinder.

The separation operation or the apparatus for separating the web from the press cylinder is/are advantageously decoupled from the following conveying operation or the apparatus for conveying the web. [emphasis added by Applicants]

As such, in Applicant's claimed invention, the separation of the web from the press cylinder is decoupled from the later conveying apparatus/conveyance of the web. Such is not the case in the references cited in the Office Action.

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More particularly, the NIEMIEC reference fails to teach or suggest Applicant's particularly claimed separation of the web from the press roller being decoupled from the conveyance of the web. With regard to such separation, page 2 of the Office Action states, in part:

Niemiec does not teach a second pull roll, in the form of a driven rotating element, disposed downstream of said press cylinder and upstream of said dryer for separating the web from said press cylinder;"

Rather, page 3 of the Office Action states, in part:

Fischer teaches a printing press having a pull roll 14, 15, which is a driven, rotating element, disposed downstream of a press cylinder, 5, and upstream of a dryer, 8, for separating the web from the press cylinder.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use the pull roll of Fischer with the printing machine of Niemiec in order to more smoothly transition the web from the printing press cylinders into the dryer.

Applicant respectfully disagrees that the combination of NIEMIEC and FISCHER references would teach or suggest Applicant's current claims.

In particular, a combination of the press of NIEMIEC and the capturing device 12 of FISCHER (which includes pull roll-type cylinders 14, 15) would not teach or suggest Applicant's claimed invention, wherein the separation of the web from the

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press cylinder is decoupled from the subsequent conveying operation of the web along the path through the dryer.

Rather, in FISCHER, the two cylinders 14, 15 are each provided with an ink-accepting covering, such as a rubber blanket 16, 17. See, col. 3 of FISCHER, lines 3 - 8. In FISCHER, if the web breaks, the web is wrapped immediately about one of the cylinders 14, 15, as described in col. 3 of FISCHER, lines 49 - 66, which states:

Upon the occurrence of a tear in the web, there is no delay in the paper web capturing apparatus according to the invention, because the cylinders 14, 15 acting as capturing cylinders are continuously in engagement with one another, and the torn paper web can thus wrap itself immediately about one of the cylinders, an action which is further promoted by the fresh ink on the rubber blankets 16, 17. The functional reliability of the apparatus is thus greater than that of comparable, known capturing apparatus.

Since the cylinders 14, 15 covered with the rubber blankets 16, 17 have approximately the same diameter as do the cylinders 5, 6, the printed image is re-printed in registry from the cylinders 14, 15, i.e., from the rubber blankets 16, 17, onto the printed web 13, whereby an improvement in quality or in other words an enhancement of the resultant printing is attained during normal operation. [emphasis added by Applicant]

As FISCHER specifically teaches that the wrapping action of the web around the cylinders 14, 15 is promoted by the fresh ink on the rubber blankets 16, 17, a person of skill in the art, reading FISCHER would conclude that there is some ink tack between the web and the cylinders, which in turn results

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in the web sticking to the cylinder in the same way as the web sticks to one of the blanket cylinders in the upstream blanket to blanket printing units. Thus, the web catching apparatus disclosed in FISCHER would, itself, further require a separating apparatus to separate the web from one of the cylinders 14, 15. Thus, FISCHER, like NIEMIEC, neither teaches, nor suggests, among other limitations of Applicant's claims, the separation of the web from the press cylinders (i.e., cylinders 14, 15 of FISCHER) being decoupled from the conveyance of the web along the path through the dryer. As such, Applicant's claims are believed patentable over the NIEMIEC and FISCHER references, taken alone, or in combination.

Further, the JUSTUS reference, cited on page 3 of the Office Action for allegedly teaching driving a pull roll at a reduced rotational speed compared to that of a press cylinder, does nothing to cure the above described deficiencies in the NIEMIEC and FISCHER references. Nor do the FRANKENBERGER or MAKOSCH references, cited in the Office Action against certain dependent claims, cure the deficiencies of the other cited references in failing to teach or suggest, among other limitations of Applicant's claims, separation of the web from the press cylinder being decoupled from the conveying of the web along the path.

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It is accordingly believed that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, teach or suggest the features of claims 1, 7 and 14. Claims 1, 7 and 14 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art. The dependent claims are believed to be patentable as well because they all are ultimately dependent on claims 1, 7 or 14.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1 - 22 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate receiving a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out. In the alternative, the entry of the amendment is requested, as it is believed to place the application in better condition for appeal, without requiring extension of the field of search.

If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

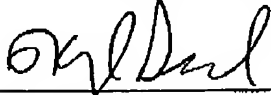
Please charge any fees that might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner and Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

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Respectfully submitted,



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